

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMCONSUL MILAN

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FOLLOWING REPEAT DOHA 654 ACTION SECSTATE INFO ABU DHABI
AMMAN DHAHRAN JIDDA KUWAIT MUSCAT MANAMA 29 MAY 77

QUOTE

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USDOC FOR CAGNE

DEPT FOR SER/CFS, A/AID, NEA/ARP

MANAMA FOR AID DODSON

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, ETEL, QA

SUBJ: GOVERNMENT OF QATAR TELECOM EXPANSION PLANS -- POSSIBLE ROLE
FOR TELECONSULT AND OTHER US FIRMS

REF: DOHA 0362, 0367, 0518, 0640, 0641, 0643

SUMMARY: IN DISCUSSIONS MORNING OF MAY 23 GOQ DIRECTOR OF
TELECOMMUNICATIONS TOLD EMBOFF THAT HE WANTED US EQUIPMENT,
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AND EXPERTISE TO BE UTILIZED IN TELECOM EXPANSION PROJECTS.
SPECIFIC REQUESTS WERE MADE FOR VARIOUS TYPES OF EQUIPMENT,
INVOLVEMENT OF US COMPANIES IN CAPITAL EQUIPMENT EXPANSION
PROGRAM AND IN CABLE PROJECTS AND A US TRAINING ADVISOR.
END SUMMARY.

1. IN MAY 23 MEETING JALAL MAHDY, DIRECTOR OF TELECOM-

MUNICATIONS FOR GOQ MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT OF COMMUNICATIONS, TOLD COMMERCIAL OFFICER THAT HE WANTED INFORMATION ON US PABX AND MONITORING EQUIPMENT (REPORTED AS TRADE OPPORTUNITIES IN DOHA 0640, 0641, AND 0642). MAHDY CONSIDERS US TELECOM EQUIPMENT TO BE SUPERIOR AND SEES THESE EQUIPMENT REQUESTS AS OPPORTUNITIES TO INTRODUCE US PRODUCTS INTO THE QATARI TELECOM PICTURE.

2. MAHDY ALSO SEES GREAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR US COMPANIES IN PLANS FOR EXPANSION OF QATARI TELEPHONE CAPITAL EQUIPMENT AND IN UPCOMING CABLE PROJECTS. ACCORDING TO MAHDY, CAPITAL EQUIPMENT PURCHASES IN NEXT THREE YEARS WILL EXCEED \$75 MILLION. GOQ IS IN MIDST OF TAKEOVER OF 75 PERCENT OF EQUITY IN INTERNAL TELEPHONE SYSTEM FROM CAGLE AND WIRELESS CO (UK) SO MAHDY WILL BE IN POSITION TO DECIDE WHERE EQUIPMENT WILL BE PURCHASED.

3. ACCORDING TO MAHDY, US FIRM, TELECONSULT, WHICH HAS ALREADY EXPRESSED INTEREST IN TELECOM SITUATION HERE (REF DOHA 0367 AND PREVIOUS) SHOULD MAINTAIN LOW PROFILE DURING TAKEOVER BUT CAN HAVE LARGE ROLE TO PLAY ONCE TAKEOVER IS COMPLETE. GOQ ALSO PLANNING LARGE EXTERNAL EXPANSION WITH CABLE PROJECTS TO KUWAIT, SAUDI ARABIA, BAHRAIN AND UAE IN THE WORKS. THESE WILL INCLUDE UNDERSEA AND LAND CONNECTIONS TO KUWAIT CITY, DHAHRAN, MANAMA AND ABU DHABI" MAHDY WANTS US COMPANIES TO BE INVOLVED IN THESE PROJECTS AND STATED THAT THIS WOULD BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR TELECONSULT TO GET IN PICTURE IN A BIG WAY. PROJECTS WILL BE WORTH MORE THAN \$40 LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MILLION.

4. ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY FOR US INVOLVEMENT IS QATARI REQUEST TO INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS UNION TO RECRUIT A TRAINING ADVISOR (REF DOHA 0362). MAHDY WANTS AN AMERICAN FOR THIS POSITION AND HE IS PERSON WHO DECIDES WHICH APPLICANT IS ACCEPTABLE. HE INDICATES THAT ONLY AN AMERICAN WILL BE ACCEPTED AND POINTEDLY SAID THAT THIS POSITION WOULD BE A GOOD ONE IN WHICH TO HAVE A TELECONSULT EMPLOYEE. APPLICATIONS SHOULD GO TO ITU IN GENEVA.

5. EMBASSY FEELS THAT STRENUOUS EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO TAKE ADVANTAGES OF THESE OPPORTUNITIES TO PENETRATE TELECOMMUNICATIONS MARKET IN QATAR. ALTHOUGH THERE NOW APPEARS TO BE LITTLE CHANCE THAT TELECONSULT WILL BE ABLE TO DISPLACE CABLE AND WIRELESS THERE IS STILL OPPORTUNITY FOR BIG BUSINESS IN QATAR FOR THIS AND OTHER US FIRMS. CAPITAL EXPANSION IN INTERNAL SYSTEM AND CABLE PROJECTS IN EXTERNAL SYSTEM ARE EXPECTED TO ACCOUNT FOR MORE THAN \$115 MILLION

OVER NEXT THREE YEARS. DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ITS DIRECTOR WOULD LIKE TO SEE HEAVY AND IF POSSIBLE EXCLUSIVE US INVOLVEMENT. LET'S NOT RPT NOT PASS UP THIS ENGRAVED INVITATION*

6. ACTION:

A. FOR DEPARTMENT: NEA/ARP PLEASE COORDINATE WITH USDOC ON FOLLOW-UP ON TOPS NOTICES ON PABX AND HF AND VHF/UHF MONITORING STATIONS (DOHA 0640, 0641 AND 0642). NEA/ARP INFORM TELECONSULT OF POSSIBLE ROLE IN EXPANSION PLANS, CABLE PROJECTS AND ADVISORY POSITION. (TELECONSULT WASHINGTON ADDRESS: TELECONSULT, MR. ELLIOT J. MOULTON, 2555 M STREET N.W., WASH, DC.). REQUEST A/AID AND SER/CFS LOCATE CANDIDATES FOR ADVISORY POSITION IN US INDUSTRY OR PRIVATE FIELDS FOR APPLICATION THROUGH ITU.

B. FOR USDOC/CAGNE: REQUEST EXPEDITIOUS HANDLING OF TOPS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NOTICES (DOHA 0640, 0641 AND 0642). ALERT US COMPANIES ON CAPITAL EQUIPMENT EXPANSION AND ON CABLE PROJECTS -- HANDLE AS MAJOR PROJECT EARLY WARNINGS.

C. FOR AMMAN: PLEASE INFORM TELECONSULT AMMAN OFFICE (MR. JAMES C. SUTTON) OF POSSIBLE TELECONSULT ROLE IN EXPANSION, CABLE PROJECTS AND PROVIDING ADVISOR THROUGH ITU. PAGANELLI. UNQUOTE VANCE.

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